

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Although it is not surprising coming from the company that offers us Mark Hyman's consistently conservative "The Point" (note: there is never a "Counterpoint"), the decision to air the documentary amounts to an illegal in-kind contribution to the Bush campaign.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. I urge the FCC not to renew Sinclair's license unless and until Sinclair agrees to abide by campaign finance laws and support the public interest with fair and balanced reporting.